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The Honourable **Samuel Gargan**, Speaker

MEMBERS PRESENT

Honourable Jim Antoine, Honourable Goo Arlooktoo, Mr. Barnabas, Mr. Enuaraq, Mr. Erasmus, Mr. Evaloarjuk, Honourable Sam Gargan, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Henry, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Miltenberger, Honourable Don Morin, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Ningark, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Picco, Mr. Rabesca, Mr. Roland, Mr. Steen, Honourable Manitok Thompson, Honourable John Todd.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

Oh, God, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for peace and justice in our land and for the constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Samuel Gargan):

Good afternoon.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 111-13(5): Cancer Registry

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, monitoring and reducing the rate of cancer among northerners is one of the department's many important responsibilities. I am happy to announce the department recently received international recognition for its work in one area of cancer monitoring. Along with the screening and health promotion programs, the NWT Cancer Registry is an important tool in our efforts to reduce the rate of cancer among northerners. The registry collects data on all cancer cases in the Northwest Territories. By analyzing this data, we can identify trends and patterns of cancer incidents in the NWT. This information lets us see where our efforts are succeeding and helps us predict where more work might be needed. As a result, we are able to target our programs and our resources more effectively.

Of course, for our efforts of cancer control to be effective, we need to be sure that the information we collect is accurate and complete. The North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, or NAACCR, is an international organization. It has established standards for measuring the quality, completeness and timeliness of data collected by cancer registries across North America.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services recently submitted data from the NWT Cancer Registry to NAACCR for a confidential evaluation. I am pleased to report that the information submitted by the department exceeded the highest standards set by NAACCR, indicating that the information in the NWT Cancer Registry is of uniformly high quality. At an award's luncheon held in Vancouver last month, the department was presented with a certificate recognizing our achievement of the NAACCR gold level certification status.

MR. SPEAKER:

Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. O'Brien.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement 448-13(5): Arviat High School Graduation Ceremonies

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this year the community of Arviat is proud to have nine of their high school students participating in another graduating ceremony which will take place tomorrow afternoon. Mr. Speaker, the names of students being honoured tomorrow are: Martina Anoe, Tony Uluadluak, John Main, Joe Savikataaq, Florence Suluk, Mike Angalik, Jonathan Gibbons, Larry Kablutsiak, Leon Pameok. I should mention, Mr. Speaker, that Ms. Martina Anoe will also be the school's honorary graduate. We are all very proud of her. Thanks to them and the previous graduates, Arviat is able to offer eager, educated young adults who are capable of filling the necessary jobs that are coming forward through Nunavut. I would like to advise you and my colleagues, I will be absent from the House tomorrow in order to attend the graduation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements, Mr. Ningark.

Member's Statement 449-13(5): Association of Municipalities Annual General Meeting

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and recognize the Association of Municipalities which will be meeting in Hay River this weekend. It shows how important the body is to local government when you have Members here who serve

on the administrative site. We have Mr. Steen who serves as an administrator in his community. Mr. Todd, at one time, served as an administrator. We have Mr. Ng who serves as an administrator and myself, yours truly. We have the Clerk of the Legislature who works for the local government in the Kitikmeot area. This shows how important the municipal local government is, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the local or community government is the closest body to a community. It ensures the municipal services are delivered in a community. It speaks for the community given many of the

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government programs and services being transferred to communities, it may be today, as we speak, one of the biggest employers in the NWT at the community level. I just want to indicate to the association and my colleagues that I will not be able to attend this very important meeting. In the essence, I would like to wish them every success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Member's Statement 450-13(5): Isuma Production Company

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Igloodik Isuma Production Inc. Zacharias Kunuk, Paul Apak, Pauloosie Qulitalik and Norman Cohn founded this production company in 1998. Isuma is best known for its widely seen TV drama series, Nunavut, programs, recreating traditional life on the land in 1945. In 1996 Isuma was chosen Nunavut Business of the Year.

This Isuma Production Company was working on an important film called Atanajua, which is Canada's first movie produced, written, directed and acting done by Inuit, before they were forced to shut down due to lack of funds. Mr. Speaker, this year, sixty members of the Inuit cast and crew was laid off due to Telefilm's disregard for this film. The production has ended. I feel that this film would be beneficial to many people. This film portrays the way life was for the Inuit, telling our stories in our own voices for the first time on national TV, as told by Mr. Kunuk. Through the entire duration of this film, they have motivated young people to respect their culture and their elders preserving Inuit culture for future generations. Mr.

Speaker, I will be asking questions to the Minister for Education, Culture and Employment about this at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
(Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 451-13(5): Arctic Bay High School Graduation Ceremonies

MR. BARNABAS:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students who will be graduating in June: Susan Akikuluk, John Aola, Chris Kilabuk, Cindy Kilabuk and June Shappa. These students will be graduating in June and I would like to thank their parents. I will not be able to be in Arctic Bay for the graduation of these students. They have the full support from their parents to complete their education and I wish them the very best in the future to get good employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
(Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mr. Enuaraq.

Member's Statement 452-13(5): Clyde River Fishing Derby

MR. ENUARAQ:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will be speaking about on May 18th in Clyde River (Translation interrupted). (Translation) They had festivities for a fishing derby. I will be naming the people who had won in the derby. Levi Ilingayuk acquired a 73 centimetre fish; second place was Limekie Palluq, 65 centimetres; third place, David Joamie, 63 centimetres; fourth place, John Barry Angutikjuak, 58 centimetres and also the in fifth place, David Joamie, 57.5 centimetres. Martha Tigullaraq was also a contestant for the fishing derby for the last long weekend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement 453-13(5): NWT Power Corporation Post-Division Structure

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak again today on the issue of the Power Corporation. The government has put forward a position to keep one corporation based on a share split of 60/40 west and east. My understanding is Nunavut is asking for a 50/50 share split. The Western Coalition has a position of a 69/31 share split based on revenue and population. There is another position as I have raised in the House a number of days ago of those who think it would be in the best interest of all of us to divide the Power Corporation now and have done with it. That is a position that has been getting some press lately and there is an increasing interest in this situation. It was very interesting to listen to the Member of Iqaluit's statement yesterday where he, in fact, supports splitting the Power Corporation. I would like to quote from yesterday's unedited Hansard, "we decided as residents endorsed by a public vote to divide, Mr. Speaker, to divide equally. Mr. Speaker that includes liabilities and, Mr. Speaker, that includes assets like the Power Corporation." If by dividing equally, my colleague means equally based on population and revenue generation, then I think you will find a lot of support for that position in the west. If, in fact, he is talking of dividing equally 50/50 then I would suggest he is dreaming in the most spectacular of technicolour and pursuing an option that will never be realized. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement 454-13(5): Extension of the Sachs Harbour Airport Runway

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to make a Member's statement on the Sachs Harbour airport, specifically, the runway itself. Mr. Speaker, early last fall the honourable Minister for Transportation, Mr. Antoine accompanied me to Sachs and he saw first hand for himself, the conditions of the airport in Sachs. He also had the opportunity to view the Muskox Harvesting Program that was being undertaken at that time. Mr. Speaker, the mayor of Sachs Harbour at that time pointed out to the Minister to make the muskox project more viable, extension of the existing runway would be needed. This would bring the transportation costs

down. Mr. Speaker, since that time, the mayor of Sachs also brought up the issue at the Beaufort Leadership Conference in Inuvik this spring. Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is possible to make the muskox harvesting project more viable if we could bring transportation costs down. What I would be asking the

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Minister of Transportation is, if he could not find the money in his own budget, would it be possible for him to consult with Mr. Kakfwi as this seems to be an economic development opportunity and possibly Mr. Kakfwi would have the money. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Erasmus.

Member's Statement 455-13(5): Long Distance Telephone Services

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the long distance service in the Northwest Territories. The CRTC recently ruled that they are going to open long distance services to competition here in the north which will open it up to companies like Sprint and AT&T who have been waiting awhile to open competition here. The GNWT has supported and asked for this to happen as well, as long as everyone is able to get affordable phone services. In order to do this, the GNWT has asked that the CRTC establish a fund to subsidize small communities so that they can have affordable phone services. Obviously, Sprint and AT&T will not pay one penny toward local services otherwise, but somebody has to pay for local services, Mr. Speaker. Someone has to go out and fix the telephone lines when they get knocked over or something like that. NorthwTel cannot afford to do all these local services and still compete for long distance rates that Sprint and AT&T are going to be bringing in. This is why I support this initiative that the GNWT is after for the fund. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it would be conceivable that some communities might totally lose services that they have been waiting so long to get. Even this last year, I believe there were a few that finally got telephone services. The CRTC will be holding hearings this summer and I urge people to attend these meetings and to put in written submissions if you cannot attend to support the start up of this fund. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 456-13(5): NWT Power Corporation Post-Division Structure

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will leave my prepared statement for today and reply to the honourable Member for Fort Smith. Mr. Speaker, I should say that the facts presented by Mr. Miltenberger from today's statement were disheartening. Mr. Miltenberger's statement was not only incorrect, unfounded, untrue and unfathomable, it was part of the rhetoric that said, Mr. Speaker, we move away from. I will quote from Hansard, Mr. Speaker, what Mr. Miltenberger forgot to mention. Mr. Miltenberger said, Mr. Speaker, in the unedited Hansard that I had said something and I will repeat exactly what I said, Mr. Speaker, from the unedited Hansard of yesterday. "Mr. Speaker, it is time to move past east/west rhetoric and do what is right for all residents east and west." Mr. Speaker, that is what I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Miltenberger wants to fussify the facts, he should fussify and fortify himself for the reality that residents in Nunavut only want what is fair and what is their fair share, nothing more or nothing less. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Rabesca.

Member's Statement 457-13(5): Rae Lakes Airport Concerns

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to address the concerns that the community of Rae Lakes sent to me. Rae Lakes, as most remote smaller communities, operates the local airport. For some time now, they have been trying to get the Department of Transportation to address some of the deficiencies that exist within the airport boundaries. Once these are dealt with, the community is requesting to get the airport certified through Transport Canada. Some of the areas of concern include the Atco type trailer used as the terminal building. I understand that this public building does

not have running water or washroom facilities. It also has only one exit door which leads to the airplane parking area. This, of course, is an extremely dangerous exit, as all traffic to and from the terminal building must work by any planes that are parked. Fencing around the airstrip is another issue. There are no controls in place to prevent vehicles or people from wandering onto the airstrip or into the parking area for the planes. Again, I think this is very dangerous. The road was built around the airstrip. However, this tote road is too narrow in places and presents a hazard to those using it. Instead of using the road, vehicles have to cross the airstrip. I believe these are valid complaints and seem to me to be contrary to a number of building codes and other regulations regarding safe operations of an airport. However, as I am not a lawyer, I do not know the proper codes. This is my opinion. It is important to ensure safety is the utmost when dealing with the aircraft and the operations of an airport. I hope the department will look into these matters and ensure the community's concerns are properly addressed. I would also like to inform the Minister that later today I will be questioning him on these most important concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement 458-13(5): Aklavik Highway Access

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is regarding the highway strategy presently underway by this government to look at new ways and new initiatives of building highways in the Northwest Territories. In regard to the communities I represent, two communities are connected by the Dempster Highway, Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic, I would like to ask the Minister, at the appropriate time, if there is a possibility of Aklavik with almost 1000 people having highway access because of the isolation of the community where a lot of their services have to be delivered by fly-in and fly-out operations. This is a costly endeavour to the community for buying goods, food, fuels and what not. The isolation of the community is basically limited by the opening of the winter road, which this year was only opened for just over two months in

which the time and adequacy of being allowed to get your goods and services in the community by road traffic are very limited. I would like to know if there is a possibility the community of Aklavik could be considered in this highway strategy and look at the possibility of constructing a highway access from the Dempster Highway to Aklavik within the next couple of years? The people of Aklavik have been talking about this initiative for several years, of looking at the possibility of having year-round access to their community. In regard to the number of communities in the Western Territory which are linked by highways, with the population of Aklavik at almost a 1000 people, it makes sense, especially in the cost to deliver goods and services and to live in the isolated community, is a very expensive way of maintaining a lifestyle if your food rates are high and your gas is selling for somewhere \$0.90 a litre. There has to be an attempt made by this government to take into consideration Aklavik's wishes to be looked at having a highway through the NWT Highway Strategy which is presently underway. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Transportation, questions on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Henry.

Member's Statement 459-13(5): Resolution of Civil Service Concerns

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to session ending in early March of this year, Premier Morin announced in this House that there would be no more layoffs during the term of this government. Premier Morin indicated that there would be no more layoffs either due to division or to department consolidations. This announcement is good news for my constituents and would obviously have relieved anxiety for some of the current staff of the GNWT. It would be fair to say that our public service has been greatly effected by the changes that have taken place during the rein of this government as we work toward division and the fight against the deficit. We have downsized, consolidated, eliminated and taken away from employees of the GNWT. It would also be fair to say that one of the greatest results of these changes has

been the financial implications felt by employees and their pocket books. Employees have now been assured their jobs are secure. The union and the GNWT have been negotiating a new collective agreement. I have heard concerns of many employees about the Hay Plan Job Evaluation System recently adopted by this government. I have also heard the frustration from employees who have been waiting for a settlement to the pay equity issue.

Mr. Speaker, these are very serious issues which are still affecting our employees. You cannot reasonably expect employees to give 100 percent when such serious issues are outstanding. We cannot afford to risk losing anymore employees who are still looking for better security and more stability. More than ever, we need the knowledge and experience which are still here to carry us through division and beyond. I also have questions about the new collective agreement, especially as it affects our GNWT employees within Yellowknife. There are many questions coming my way on pay equity and the Hay Plan, as I mentioned. We must clear the air, Mr. Speaker, we must resolve these issues which are impacting our employees and the morale. Mr. Todd referred to them as our most valuable resource, which I agree with. Both this government and the UNW have to get back to the table with no preconditions to talk about our employees and their membership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Ootes.

Member's Statement 460-13(5): Western Arctic Tourism Association Initiatives

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tourism is big business in the north, in fact, it is the third biggest employer and revenue generator behind mining and government. In the western Arctic, several thousand people are employed either part-time or full-time in tourism. At present the NWT receive about 60,000 visitors each year who inject upwards of \$55 million into the economy. I attended part of the AGM of Western Arctic Tourism Association's annual meeting held recently here in Yellowknife where the association unveiled its 1998-99 business plan and its tourism strategy document. The association has done a lot of valuable work in response to RWED Minister Kakfwi's

direction to the association. The association strategy document has six key objectives:

- to create and build a new identity for the NWT;
- develop a representative, balanced membership base;
- provide support for member's marketing initiatives
- improve market access to community-based and members' products
- provide market research and analyses to keep northern companies abreast of trends;
- maintain a dynamic partnership

Western Arctic Tourism Association's President, Shaunet McNeil and its executive director, Eric Yaxley, have stated that underlying the six objectives identified in the strategy document are some fundamental concerns, which are:

That funding support for the GNWT be maintained.

- McNeil points out that this funding is a resource for communities to build on and that any deterioration in the financial support from the government will directly affect the economic base of many operators and as a result the employment levels of community people.
- The industry needs reassurance that, as we get closer to division, the government address the concerns of image for the western Arctic.
- The association wants the government to have a greater focus on tourism and reinvest in the industry and its marketing efforts.

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- These, I think, are vital as far as the industry is concerned. Now that the association has its act together, it is apparent the industry needs government support to take the next steps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement 461-13(5): Initiatives to Combat Impaired Driving

MRS. GROENEWEGEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently the Department of Transportation committed to starting a highly publicized consultation process on drunk driving in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the department's efforts to deal with the drunk driving situation in the Northwest Territories. However, Mr. Speaker, it must be remembered that the only real power this government has is that it can change the licensing requirements for drivers in the NWT. This means that after a conviction on drunk driving, your licence could be revoked for a longer period of time and possibly permanently under the new proposals.

I fully support this government initiative, Mr. Speaker, however, I strongly believe that to change old habits and attitudes about drunk driving, there has to be an effective educational component to any program the department develops.

Increased penalties and consequences for drunk driving are important. However, Mr. Speaker, we cannot develop an effective anti-drunk driving campaign in isolation. We have to involve the community, we have to get to the kids in school and warn them of the dangers of drunk driving and we have to make it socially acceptable to take the keys away from friends, family or anyone should they wish to drive impaired.

Mr. Speaker, the police need to be supported in the fight against impaired driving. If you see someone driving drunk, you have a responsibility to your fellow residents in your community to report this person to the police. More and more people are now reporting drunk drivers and we need to encourage this through programs such as Crime Stoppers.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the day when drunk driving is a thing of the past, to when society's attitudes have changed and people who drive impaired would be viewed as socially inappropriate and legally put in the same category of people in public places wielding or pointing lethal loaded weapons at each other. Drunk drivers potentially use their vehicles as lethal weapons which do maim and kill people.

It looks, Mr. Speaker, like the Department of Transportation has made a good start. I commend the Minister and his staff for this initiative. I look forward to the legislative proposal that will come out of this consultation process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize the mayor of Clyde River, James Qillaq and beside him is also a good friend of mine from Pond Inlet, a well-known actor, the big screen movie star, David Kunuk. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again I would like to recognize the mayor of Baker Lake, his worship David Tagoona and his SAO Leo Caoutte.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Ms. Thompson.

HON. MANITOK THOMPSON:

Today I would like to recognize the deputy mayor of Repulse Bay, John Kaunak and he is also my constituency assistant for the riding.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Barnabas.

MR. BARNABAS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my wife who puts up with me for a long time and my daughter, Marie. I would also like to

recognize John Kaunak, my uncle from Repulse Bay and David Kunuk. He also used to be executive member for Baffin Divisional Board of Education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ningark.

MR. NINGARK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize someone in the gallery who was very good at playing the harmonica when I was younger and very good at hitting targets when we played together, John Kaunak. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a couple of Yellowknife North constituents, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Bibby.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Steen.

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MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a constituent from Sachs Harbour, Mrs. Sheila Nasogaluak, the wife of a well-known carver, Eli Nasogaluak, and she is here for a wildlife harvester workshop. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize someone in the gallery that is from my constituency, David Kunuk, he is also a relative of mine. It is very nice to see him appearing on TV. I would also like to recognize Levi Barnabas' wife, and in the Inuit tradition, she is named after the person who was a very good friend of mine and she is called Qulaut. I would also like to recognize the people of the Keewatin region, John Kaunak, as well as his companions. Thank you. (Translation ends)

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ian MacDonald, he is with the Gwich'in Human Resource Council. Welcome Ian.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce for the Harvest Study Coordinators for the Harvest Study in Nunavut, Mr. Johnny MacPherson, a resident of Iqaluit and with Johnny is David Snowcroft, a social statistician from Toronto. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 566-13(5): Kitikmeot Boarding Home

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to my colleague from the Kitikmeot region,

Minister for Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng. Mr. Ng and I had the opportunity and the pleasure of attending the Kitikmeot's Leaders' Forum recently. We were made welcome and full participants of the meeting and were subsequently asked tough questions. Many concerns relating to the well-being of the people of Kitikmeot were brought up and one such concern is in relation to the Kitikmeot Boarding Home in Yellowknife. It has to do with the management and operation of the Kitikmeot Boarding Home. The concerns relate to a number of outstanding issues from five years ago. My question to the honourable Minister, Mr. Speaker, is will the Minister work closely with the Kitikmeot Health Board to deal with some of the concerns I have brought up to his attention during the meeting of the Kitikmeot leaders in Kugluktuk? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Ng.

Return To Question 566-13(5): Kitikmeot Boarding Home

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my tenure as Health and Social Services Minister, I have had concerns brought forward to me, both in that capacity and also in the capacity of being the MLA for the constituency, similar to Mr. Ningark. When these issues develop, I quickly pass them on to the Health and Social Services Board and asked them to try and address the issues in as timely a fashion as possible. I understand that concerns that have been brought up in the past few months have been acted upon, but if there are issues that remain outstanding, certainly, I am more than happy to continue and try to resolve those issues in conjunction with the regional board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ningark.

Supplementary To Question 566-13(5): Kitikmeot Boarding Home

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to the same honourable Minister, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister monitor the process and get back to me about the status of the actions being taken to correct some of

the concerns from the residents of the Kitikmeot?
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Ng.

Further Return To Question 566-13(5): Kitikmeot
Boarding Home

HON. KELVIN NG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I would be
more than happy to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Steen.

Question 567-13(5): Sachs Harbour Runway
Extension

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is
in relation to my Member's statement and is directed
to the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

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Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement,
Sachs Harbour sees the extension of the existing
airport runway as very beneficial for the economics of
that community, in particular bringing down the cost of
freight and especially in regard to the Musk Ox
Harvesting Project. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my
statement, the Minister had an opportunity to see the
Musk Ox Harvesting Project and the fact that it is
quite the going operation with the Sachs Harbour
people. My question to the Minister of Transportation
is, has he recently been made aware officially, from
Sachs Harbour, of the request for the extension of the
runways?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 567-13(5): Sachs Harbour
Runway Extension

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not recall
anything recent. To my recollection, our visit last
winter, meeting with the mayor, was a verbal request
for that. I thought it was just part of a discussion. I do

not recall saying anything that is recent that is
requesting formally the extension of this airport.
Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr.
Steen.

Supplementary To Question 567-13(5): Sachs
Harbour Runway Extension

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The most recent request, I
believe, from Sachs Harbour, that I am aware of, was
put forward at the Beaufort Delta Leadership
Conference as a motion supported by all the
Members present for extension of the Sachs Harbour
runway. It is unfortunate that the Minister does not
have a copy of that motion yet. I wonder if the
Minister would look into obtaining a copy of that
motion and re-examining the priorities of extending
Sachs Harbour's runway?

MR. SPEAKER:

I heard two questions. Mr. Antoine, two questions.

Further Return To Question 567-13(5): Sachs
Harbour Runway Extension

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the motions
from the Beaufort Leaders' Conference, we usually
receive it and all the pertinent motions for my
department are received by my department. If that
package of information is sent, then my department
would have access to this motion at this time. Thank
you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Steen.

Supplementary To Question 567-13(5): Sachs
Harbour Runway Extension

MR. STEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary, if
the Minister cannot find the money in his own budget,
would he consider approaching Mr. Kakfwi, as this
could very easily be identified as an economic
development project? Would he consider

approaching Mr. Kakwi with possibly obtaining funding from Mr. Kakwi's department for the extension of the runway? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 567-13(5): Sachs Harbour Runway Extension

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while the honourable Member was making his Members' statement, following that I had already approached Mr. Kakwi. He was very hesitant to make any reply, indicating that he may not have any source of revenue at this time. Mr. Speaker, in general, in response to honourable Member Steen's request, I just want to mention some information in the House. It might be part of the answer he is looking for. Last year, because of the numerous requests from a number of communities to extend their runways, we had already indicated to this House that we were going to be initiating a study to look at all the requests and try to develop some sort of a strategy to do that. As a result, we have hired a consultant group in association with northern companies as technical advisors. We conducted a review of all the issues related to runway lengths. This review was conducted in consultation with air carriers and with communities. This study is looking at changing travel patterns, division of the Northwest Territories, current and future aircraft use by air carriers, the effect of a larger jet aircraft and level and frequency of air service, as well as the cost benefits, economic and social impacts in the communities. This department has received a preliminary report from the consultation and is studying the conclusion's recommendation. I will ask the department specifically, on behalf of honourable Member Steen, to see what, if anything, has been done in regard to this community of Sachs Harbour and I will get back to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Henry.

Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier, Mr. Morin. Normally in July, we have

extremely nice weather here in the city of Yellowknife, and I am hoping that will continue this July as we have a very special occasion happening. The Minister announced early last year that the western Premiers would be coming to the Northwest Territories and to its capital city. What I would like the Premier to do at this time, if he could give us an update on where the plans for preparation of this important meeting, how they are coming? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At present, our capable staff in Intergovernmental Affairs is working with other provincial jurisdictions and developing an agenda for the 1998 Western Premiers' Conference. Hopefully that work will be done in the next couple of weeks. We are organizing it now. We have hired Darlene Mandeville to organize the whole event. We have also contacted a prominent northern business person to raise money for the Western Premiers' Conference as well, Mr. Jack Walker. My understanding is he will be contacting the private sector to raise money to sponsor events and things like that. We are planning to have a barbecue and a cultural evening. My wife will also be hosting an aboriginal fashion show for the Premiers' wives. The Premiers' wives will also be flying to a traditional Dene-Metis community for a few hours. There will also be a reception. When the conference is over, we will be taking the Premiers to Plummer's Fishing Lodge on Great Slave Lake for two days of northern enjoyment of fishing.

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Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Premier tell us how long the western Premiers will be visiting the Northwest Territories and what type of time they will have available to meet with other MLAs, the business community, Association of Municipalities and so forth? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premiers arrive, I believe, on a Friday and the conference is over on a Saturday. It is usually a two-day conference. We are sending out invitations. The Northwest Territories is a host for this conference, so I am trying to make sure it is a Northwest Territories event that includes people from clear across the Northwest Territories, not just the capital city. That is very important. I have sent out invitations already. I believe my wife has sent out invitations as well to all the chiefs' wives. I have sent out invitations to the chiefs, the Metis local presidents, the Dene Nation, the Metis Nation, NTI and mayors. I am sure I forgot some but just about to every elected leader in the Northwest Territories to come to the conference as well as their spouses. We have it organized fairly well. We have the greatest of respect for Darlene Mandeville, who is organizing it. She seems to be doing a very good job, so I am sure it will be a great event, and I am sure northerners will come out and enjoy meeting the western Premiers. This is the first time we are ever hosting a Western Premiers' Conference in the Northwest Territories. It will also be the last time as the Northwest Territories exists today. We will be hosting again in six years. We are on that rotation list. MLAs will be getting invitations as well and feel free to attend. We will not be paying your way or anybody's way. Your wives and husbands will be getting invitations as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Henry.

Supplementary To Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

MR. HENRY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A final question to the Premier, if I may. I have never had the opportunity to attend one of the meetings of the western Premiers. Could the Premier tell us what type of items would be on the agenda? I would be interested in knowing that so that potentially Members could have some input into the Premier with regard to ideas he could propose? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 568-13(5): Western Premiers' Conference Planning

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Intergovernmental Affairs is working with the provincial jurisdictions and the Yukon Territory on developing the agenda. I would prefer at this time to wait until the agenda is developed, to comment on it. I think that is only proper. If Members feel they have any issues they would like to raise, feel free to do that with myself. Let me assure all Members that when I attend these conferences, I will be hosting this conference. The Northwest Territories agenda will be on the agenda at every opportunity I have. We also will have national press in Yellowknife for 48 hours, so we have to take every opportunity to capitalize on that as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Picco.

Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister in charge of the Liquor Licensing Board and Liquor Taxing. What discussions have taken place for a separate liquor licensing board and liquor tax collecting after March 31, 1999 in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

HON. JOHN TODD:

Discussions regarding the Liquor Licensing Board, whether it is from a regulatory perspective or from a taxation perspective, are on the table, as is everything else with respect to division. We are moving along slowly but surely in trying to resolve each and every one of those issues. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut government will not have much at the beginning stages of a revenue stream other than the fiscal grant from the federal government. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, for example, liquor is shipped to the Keewatin and the Kitikmeot region from here in Yellowknife. Presently the NWT levies and collects its taxes on these shipments within this jurisdiction here in Yellowknife. After division, would the liquor be shipped directly from Yellowknife and then taxed by the Western Arctic and then taxed by Nunavut? How would that work? Mr. Todd said they have had some preliminary discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

HON. JOHN TODD:

I would not say it is double taxing. As I said, we are working these issues out. It is all on the table

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along with two or three hundred other issues. We will have to come to some appropriate arrangement that permits the acquisition and access to liquor and that the new Nunavut government will be able to tax it. I think if my memory serves me correctly, there were some changes being made to the Nunavut Act that would permit Nunavut to make some changes like taxation on liquor and other things that would occur after April 1, 1999. I do not have a detailed response today because it is currently being discussed. I am sure that we will reach resolve to this issue well before April 1, 1999. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Picco.

Supplementary To Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, there is only one Liquor Licensing Board in the Northwest Territories. I think there is only one person from Nunavut on that Liquor Licensing board. The discussions, to date, have been centred around the Liquor Licensing Board and how that would be applicable to Nunavut and how we would have board representation to have that board up and running by April 1st. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 569-13(5): Division Issues Re: Licensing and Taxation

HON. JOHN TODD:

The whole issue of agencies, boards and commissions is one that is all encompassing. They are not isolated, whether you talk about the liquor board, the Public Utilities Board, the Labour Standards Board or whatever. The whole issue of boards and how they are going to function in Nunavut is currently under review by the parties at the table. As I said to my honourable colleague, I am optimistic we will reach the appropriate resolve and compromises that are necessary to ensure Nunavut has the ability; one, to regulate its own liquor outlets, if you want; and two, to secure the necessary taxes that do come from liquor, I think, are somewhere in the region of about \$30 million a year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Ootes.

Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Renewable, Wildlife and Economic Development. I spoke earlier about the need to revitalize and to address the issue of the Tourism

Association's concern with regard to support for their association. There are a lot of people working in the tourism industry here in the north. The association wants the government to have a greater focus on tourism through reinvestment in the industry and its marketing efforts. My question for the Minister is, will the Minister look at providing more dollars for the association and their efforts so that they can continue to expand and employ people? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has always been the intent of the department and the government to support the tourism industry, the Tourism Association. The question is to clarify and focus on those areas that need the most immediate attention and to strategize and develop a plan that would make best use of existing dollars. If it is necessary to look at existing dollars, we would attempt to do that, provided there is a clear rationale for it. We have said that to the association on a number of occasions, and we continue to work with the association and the tourism industry with that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year the Minister stated that he wanted the association to get its act together, so to speak. I think the association has its act together. They did a strategic plan. They have an annual report. They have a 1998-99 report. In their strategic document, they have six objectives. In addition, they have some underlying objectives. What I want to know, is the Minister prepared to provide more dollars for the association both for their marketing initiative and for their operations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every occasion that the association has asked for meetings, we have provided the forum to do that. If there are specific recommendations and requests the association wishes to make at this time, I would be pleased, as a Minister, to meet with them. We have tried to foster a close relationship where the association becomes more accountable and deals directly with myself, in ironing out the kind of issues that need to be dealt with and to provide full rationalization for any additional requests that they wish to make at this time. On a positive note, if it is something that is worthwhile that we can rationalize, give support to, we have said we will do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another area of concern that the association had was with the image. With the split of the two territories, of course, we are going to have some questions with regard to our heraldic symbols. The association's concern, of course, is that they live and breathe by the symbols, and it is the promotion around the country to

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attract tourism, such as the polar bear symbol. Would the Minister provide some assistance or resources to the association to have them to have the ability to have some input into the development and the whole question of a heraldic symbol since the association, its employees and beneficiaries, are direct beneficiaries of those symbols? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Mr. Speaker, there are some implications for division for small agencies and groups that need to be addressed. As a government, we have tried to take an organized, systematic approach to resolving and clarifying these issues on a fair, equitable basis. These would be some of the ongoing issues that still need our attention. Of course, we will be supportive and try to make sure that disruption to associations like this, that may result from division will be minimal and can be handled with minimum disruption for their needs and requirements.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Ootes.

Supplementary To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Division is not very far off, and the association has real problems because what do they put on their letterhead, how do they address the whole question of promotion and so forth, with symbols. I think it is an urgent matter, and I would appreciate if the Minister would make that a priority. I heard what he said, but in a way it is a bit rhetoric. I wonder if the Minister would address that on a very strong basis with his western colleagues to address this issue? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return To Question 570-13(5): Support for the NWT Tourism Association

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do what I can to help deal with that particular problem and issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to Mr. Todd, the Minister responsible for Division. Mr. Speaker, after respectfully listening to Mr. Miltenberger's questionable dissertation on the possible sharing of the Power Corporation and Mr. Picco's fair analysis of the facts, my question would be who will make the final decision regarding the outcome of how the Power Corporation will be shared as it pertains to division? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister responsible for the Division Secretariat, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

HON. JOHN TODD:

The whole issue of division and assets and liabilities is, we have a table and the assets and liabilities sides are working very effectively and moving expeditiously to identify what is east and what is west. There will be a number of areas where we have what we call a trapped asset that we are going to have to work out some arrangement with our partners. A level head has to prevail here, and you have to crank down the rhetoric and we have got to, at some point, reach the appropriate compromise that meets all the needs of the territories, whether you are living in Fort Smith or Iqaluit. There is no question that the NWT Power Corporation and, for that matter, the Workers' Compensation Board are very difficult issues at the present time. We are leaving it up to the negotiators at this time to try to reach a compromise with all the partners around the table so we can move forward in a fair and equitable manner. Ultimately, we will come to an arrangement that is in the best interest of all northerners, not one particular section of the country or the other. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the event that the parties cannot come to an agreement that is fair to all parties, what is the position of this government? Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

HON. JOHN TODD:

For the present time, Mr. Speaker, the position of the territorial government and the Cabinet is that the Power Corporation, at this time, stays as one. I will repeat that, Mr. Speaker. My honourable colleague asked what the current position of the territorial government is in relationship to the NWT Power Corporation, I believe. If that is the question he asked, the position of the government at the present time is it remains as one entity. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify my question. My question was in the event that an agreement cannot be concluded, what will be the position of this government, and what timeframe will the government put in place in order to deal with this, given the fact that we are approximately 300 days prior to division? Thank you.

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MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I should clarify for my colleague that the one thing I was remiss in not mentioning is, we have currently recruited a facilitator in an effort to bring all the parties together to reach an appropriate compromise. Should we, unfortunately, not come to the kind of compromise that we, as legislators, would want to occur, there are provisions within the Nunavut Act that was passed at Parliament

that would provide the ability for the Minister of DIAND to make some decisions and to be the ultimate arbitrator on issues where we cannot come to an agreement on. I am optimistic that in my 32 years of experience in this country is, that at some point, we will all recognize there is a need for compromise on these fundamental difficulty issues that affects us all. The cost of power, the delivery of power is an essential service that we all recognize. Therefore, we have got to try to make a concerted effort to reach an arrangement that will satisfy all our constituents across the territories. As I said earlier, they have recruited a facilitator in a last effort to try to reach an arrangement that will satisfy all parties. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. O'Brien.

Supplementary To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

MR. O'BRIEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell this House who was at the table during these discussions, What parties and also the timeframe you are considering before you may have to intervene? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 571-13(5): Equitable Division of Assets and Liabilities

HON. JOHN TODD:

The parties at the table are the parties that have been at the table from the very beginning that is the federal government, the territorial government, NTI, Interim Commissioner and the Western Coalition. These parties have been there from the beginning and all issues that relate to division. As I said earlier, we have, in an effort to see if we can bring all the players to the table, brought on a skilled facilitator who has no direct interest in this issue. He is out of Toronto, I believe. With respect to time, I think we have to be a little careful in setting deadlines when we are in these sensitive negotiations. I, at this time, would be reluctant to say we are going to solve the problem in seven days, ten days or 21 days. We have 300 days left. I am sure, prior to April 1, 1999, common sense will prevail, and the facilitator will reach, I hope, an

appropriate compromise that satisfies all parties, east and west. Thank you.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Krutko.

Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Transportation. It is in regard to my Member's statement. It concerns the community of Aklavik in regard to being isolated and having an opportunity to look at the possibility of having a road access to the community. My question to the Minister is, because the cost of goods and services in the communities is high and that the cost of living is very high in all the isolated communities, and also looking at the possible savings to this government in the overall long term, what does a community have to do to get the department to look at the possibility of road access to a community such as Aklavik that presently finds itself isolated at this time of year?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member representing his community and what do they have to do to get a road? It is a long process. I can only say that requesting a community access into Aklavik from the existing road system is not a simple, easy task. It probably has to go through a long process. The main thing is that the financial resources are not there. As well, there are other priorities out there. How do we prioritize it, is another thing? I understand it is probably a request from the community at first, but the capacity of this government to do it is not there. It will have to be viewed as a long term process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is there a possibility that the Department of Transportation can sit down with the community of Aklavik to start the preliminary discussions on what it will take to look at the long term planning or looking at the prioritization of such an effort? I know it has to start somewhere. I would like to ask the Minister, at this time, if he can make an effort to have someone within his Department of Transportation meet with the community in Aklavik and start this process as soon as possible?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has a planning section in our department and certainly I could make a commitment that the personnel in the department would go to the community and sit down and listen to requests and take it from there. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

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MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the Highways Strategic Committee, that has presently been put together, will they also be looking at concerns from communities such as Aklavik, to look at the possibility of considering these as one of the objectives or possibilities? We are talking about a road to Tuktoyaktuk. We are talking about the Mackenzie Valley. What does the community of Aklavik have to do to get the attention of this committee to possibly have a public hearing in their community to talk about the needs of that community, regarding a possible

highway system, linking them to the Dempster Highway?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the highway strategy is an initiative of this government to look at the Four Road Project. This is the direction of this government, to look at what is there. We acknowledge there are numerous transportation needs across the Northwest Territories and we must continue to look for different ways, new and improved ways of improving the transportation services we have.

The focus now is to maintain what we have, as best we can and focus on new initiatives which could produce significant return for investment in the short term. With the different discussions over the years of the Mackenzie Valley Highway extension that has been requested for many years, we are going to take a look at that. We are taking a look at the recent request from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk that has been there for a while. There is some push from that side, so we are going to take a look at that. The Slave Geologic Province Transportation Corridor from Yellowknife north into the rich mineral areas to the north of us, with the gold mines that are there, the potential of the development of the diamond mines, we have to take a close look at that as well. We are taking a look at that and looking at the reconstruction of the Highway No. 3 between Rae and Yellowknife, to see if we can speed it up. These are the four initiatives the government has laid down.

We are planning to have stakeholders' meetings in three of the areas. For the Slave Geological Province on June 4, 1998 here in Yellowknife, I would like to bring the bands, stakeholders, and metis locals, the mayors, business leaders and MLAs of the area, and get them together to have a frank discussion of what it would mean. We are also planning to have another stakeholder meeting in Norman Wells, June 9, 1998, to discuss the Mackenzie Valley Highway. We are having a get together for the Tuk-Inuvik road in Inuvik on June 10, 1998. Perhaps the honourable Member, Mr. Krutko, who is invited to this meeting in Inuvik can raise his concerns at that time. It might be an

opportune time to get his concerns raised. Other than that, we have set the course on this strategy. If there are any additional requests, we will be receiving it all the time. We just received a request from Nahanni Butte recently of putting in a road, the resources into the Nahanni area for the Cadillac Mine area. There are other interests out there who are vying for the priority. My suggestion is to bring this concern up at the Inuvik meeting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

MR. KRUTKO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the strategic planning committee and making these meetings public, has any of this work by the committee been run through the different Members? This is the first I have heard about this meeting in Inuvik and it seems like the committee is. At the end of the day, who does this committee report to and will they look at a strategic plan for the overall MacKenzie Valley in regard to the western highway system linking all communities, or is this just the four initiatives that you mentioned? Whom do they report to? Exactly when will this plan become a public document for Members in this House to see? What process do we have in that process?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 572-13(5): Road Access to Aklavik

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initiative is a new initiative and we would like to move on it and would like to have some substance for the Premier when the western Ministers are here, to try to get all the stakeholders together at these three different meetings and get some direction from the stakeholders. Whatever develops out of it, there are a lot of other initiatives. This is just one initiative to try to get the stakeholders together first. There are other initiatives to undertake and to study, like identification and analysis of the project financial alternates, which my honourable colleagues, Mr. Todd and I were working on, socio-economic impact benefit cost

analysis, route analysis, preliminary engineering environmental scoping and collection of baseline information. All this work has to get done. I am the lead Minister in this initiative and the report will come to me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Rabesca.

Question 573-13(5): Concerns Re: Rae Lakes Airport

MR. RABESCA:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was alluding to in my Member's statement, Rae Lakes has some serious concerns regarding their Arctic airport facilities. My understanding is these concerns must be addressed prior to the airport being certified by Transport Canada. My question to the Minister of Transportation, the honourable Jim Antoine is, would he be prepared to meet with the community to ensure these concerns are cleared up, in order for them to continue with their certification of this airport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 573-13(5): Concerns Re: Rae Lakes Airport

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HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I am prepared to meet with the community in this regard. The department is engaged with the community now to try to arrange a visit to complete the safety audits. The proposed meeting is the third week in June. We are waiting for the community to confirm at this time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Question 574-13(5): Funding for Isuma Production Company

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Premier, in the absence of the Minister of Education, Culture and

Employment. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I spoke about the problems of the Isuma Production Company. Because culture is a very important issue, I support the project that Isuma Production is trying to complete. I think their film will be beneficial to many people and this is why I raised my concern for its funding, which has since been cut off.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment if he would write a letter to Telefilm Canada to continue funding for the Atanajua film, in order for them to complete their project in a timely manner? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

Return To Question 574-13(5): Funding for Isuma Production Company

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be pleased to talk to the Minister of Education, who is in charge of that, to meet with the Member on Monday and to get all the facts and will be pleased, as a government, to try to assist where we can. We will do that on Monday, as soon as we can arrange a meeting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Evaloarjuk.

Supplementary To Question 574-13(5): Funding for Isuma Production Company

MR. EVALOARJUK:

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary to my question. Could the Premier commit to find funding in his department to provide for the making of this Inuit film? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Morin.

Further Return To Question 574-13(5): Funding for Isuma Production Company

HON. DON MORIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Department of the Executive, we do not have funding for such a thing as making films. I will raise the issue with the Minister responsible. The Minister responsible will meet with the Member on Monday, if it is possible and if the

Member has time, to get all the facts. Then we will consider it, just like the rest of the requests that are brought forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC
Continuation Issues

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Division, in regard to the Power Corporation. He earlier made a comment and a suggestion that the rhetoric on this issue be toned down and it is a good suggestion. I hope my colleagues from Iqaluit and Kivallivik take it to heart because their kinds of inflammatory comments add nothing to the measured, tempered debate, we need to resolve this issue.

My question to the Minister is in regard to the issue of the facilitator that he indicated has been hired. Could he indicate the duties of this facilitator? Is it to meditate as well as analyze?

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The Minister responsible for Division Secretariat, Mr. Todd.

Return To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC
Continuation Issues

HON. JOHN TODD:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have hired the mediator or facilitator, if you want, in an effort to get all parties back to the table to reach an appropriate compromise, as I said earlier. Optimistically we hope that common sense will prevail and the interests of territorial residents will be of paramount importance, in whatever decisions we make. I can say and the Minister has talked about it, Mr. Dent, consistently that there is a cost attached to the dividing up of the NWT Power Corporation. It will affect us all. I think it is very important that be said publicly. My understanding, if my memory serves me correctly, as I always like to qualify my statements, as my friend, Mr. Picco does, is it could be as much as 9 percent in the eastern Arctic and 5 percent in the west. As long as everybody understands the ramifications and the long-term costs associated with the dividing of the Power Corporation, the position of this government

has been consistent, that we should remain as one at this time. We should find the appropriate compromise that satisfies people in terms of its corporate modus operandi, how its board of directors will operate, et cetera. The implications are significant if we cannot reach a compromise and an arrangement that will satisfy everybody in terms of the overall costs to the people we represent and the people out there in the Arctic, east or west. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of
NWTPC Continuation Issues

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary question to the Minister, in response to his comments, is that very clearly there is a cost to every decision we make, be it to divide or be it to stay together. My understanding that one of the reasons for the hiring of this facilitator was to, in fact, review and analysis the data because

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there were questions from parties at the table as to its relevance and veracity. There was a question as whether was it accurate, the figures like the Minister just quoted in this House. Would that be one of the jobs this facilitator will do as well, is to look at the facts and assure everybody, in fact, they are accurate and say what they mean? Mr. Todd.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of
NWTPC Continuation Issues

HON. JOHN TODD:

Well, as my colleague knows, the negotiations, if you want and the overall political responsibility is Mr. Dent's, who is not here today. I have the overall responsibility of trying to coordinate all the activities in division. My understanding, from discussions with my honourable colleague, is that he stands by those figures where he is saying that there is going to be an additional cost attached to the division of the NWT Power Corporation. He will be back on Monday and I am sure if you ask him, he will be able to confirm

that. My understanding of the facilitator is to try to come to some arrangement with the parties and put all the facts on the table as my colleague says. I am not sure whether he is going to examine them to verify whether they are correct or not. I would have to check with Mr. Dent. My overall understanding is that should we decide or should it come to pass that there is a desire to divide the Power Corporation into two entities, there is a fiscal cost attached to it that I am told will be a 9 percent increase in the power rates in the eastern Arctic and 5 percent increase in the western Arctic. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC Continuation Issues

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very clearly that kind of cost, as I brought up in the House, in my opinion, could be absorbed in the west by a well-thought out reorganization plan, however, that is not the point of the questions today. My question to the Minister would be then, could he indicate who, in fact, this facilitator is? Is it somebody with a background in this area who has credible credentials to do this kind of work? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC Continuation Issues

HON. JOHN TODD:

When I read the briefing note earlier last week, I believe there were two well-qualified facilitators who were knowledgeable in this whole field. One was a former Deputy Minister of DIAND, Mr. Arthur Kroeger. I think. The other one was this firm out of Toronto and I must apologize to my colleague that I do not have the name before me today. Both these organizations have impeccable credentials when it comes to the kind of facilitating in this complicated question of the NWT Power Corporation. We are optimistic, as we always have to be in this game that we will come to the appropriate compromise that is necessary. I keep repeating myself, to ensure that ultimately whatever decision we make is in the best

interests of people from Pond Inlet to Tuktoyaktuk. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC Continuation Issues

MR. MILTENBERGER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very clearly, we are all interested in reaching that point where we have a satisfactory compromise and resolution to this issue. As well, I, of course, applaud the Minister, Mr. Dent, for standing by his figures. Unfortunately, there are the questions coming from other quarters that he has to address. Could the Minister assure us that the findings and work of this facilitator will be brought forward so that all Members are aware of what is happening and also that it is in a very straightforward, clear language so there is no misunderstanding, no needless rhetoric and baffle gab to confuse the less fortunate with limited powers of understanding on some of these issues? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Todd.

Further Return To Question 575-13(5): Resolution of NWTPC Continuation Issues

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could not agree more with my honourable colleague. The last thing I would want is politicians negotiating this arrangement, particularly, when you consider the discussion that goes on here on a frequent basis. There is a concerted effort on the part of the Minister and certainly on the part of myself and Mr. Arlooktoo, who are the three Ministers responsible for Division, to reach the right compromise. You know, you have to make decisions based upon the information that is placed before you and you have to believe that the kinds of people you recruit have the capability to be able to give you sound reasons for you to make wise choices. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Mr. Erasmus.

Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Telecommunications. Earlier today I made a statement concerning the CRTC hearings in regard to opening the NWT for competition in the area of long distance phone calls. Yesterday, the Minister had indicated that the GNWT supported the establishment of a national fund to subsidize high-cost service areas. I wonder if the Minister could indicate why the GNWT supports the establishment of this national fund?

MR. SPEAKER:

The Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

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the CRTC decided to go for long distance competition and, in preparation for that, the GNWT supported this initiative providing that there is some form of subsidization for the high-cost service areas. The reason being, if other telephone providers, such as AT & T and Sprint, like the honourable Member mentioned in his statement, move into this area, they are business people and they will be going for the high profit areas which are the major centres. We anticipate that the smaller communities may be left out of that arrangement and the cost of providing services in these communities is very high. Currently, NorthwesTel is able to provide the long distance service as well the local service and a form of subsidy is in place. If that is lost, then the small local services will have a very high cost. To try to alleviate that problem and try to continue the services in the communities, this government supported the idea of establishing a fund. This fund would most likely come from long distance revenues from the phone companies in the north as well as in the south.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The way the government proposed it, would this fund cost this government any money?

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding of this arrangement is that it will not cost this government any more money than we are currently involved, which is very minimal. It will not have any effect on us.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I heard this fund being classified as a subsidy. Would it be more appropriate to say that it is actually a rate that those companies would pay to access NorthwesTel's current system? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 576-13(5): Telecommunication Assistance Fund

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

That is right. It is not really proposed now as a subsidy but actually an assistance to any competing telecommunication service provider in the north to assure that reasonable service costs are available to other remote high-cost areas. It is not really a subsidy but sort of an assistance that will be provided to whichever telecommunications service provider who is successful in providing the service.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oral questions. Final supplementary, Mr. Erasmus.

Supplementary To Question 576-13(5):
Telecommunication Assistance Fund

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate when and where the CRTC hearings will be, so that people may participate? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 576-13(5):
Telecommunication Assistance Fund

HON. JIM ANTOINE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a hearing in Whitehorse this last couple of days and there is another hearing set for Iqaluit, I believe for June 25th, and I believe that is the next one. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Enuaraq.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

BILL 17: An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Legislative Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act and wishes to report that Bill 17 is now ready for further consideration of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5) and have Bill 17 ordered into the Committee of the Whole today.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Member for Baffin Central is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 70(5). Do I have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Enuaraq, you have unanimous consent. Bill 17 will be ordered into the Committee of the Whole for today. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, and Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act, with Mr. Ningark in the Chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I call the committee to order. We have two bills here. Bill 16 and Bill 17. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That we proceed with

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the first item, Bill 16 followed by Bill 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do I have the concurrence of the committee that we will deal with Bill 16 and subsequently Bill 17. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. We will take a 15-minute break.

--Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

I would like to call the committee back to order. We have two items on the table. One is Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, and Bill 17,

Territorial Court Act. We will proceed as agreed to, with Bill 16. Mr. Todd, do you have any opening remarks?

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this legislation will amend the Northwest Territories Income Tax Act to allow the Government of the Northwest Territories to implement the NWT Child Benefit, an initiative I announced in the budget address in January.

The NWT Child Benefit is the GNWT's contribution to the National Child Benefit Program. This is a joint effort by the federal, provincial and territorial governments to reduce child poverty in Canada.

We know that child poverty can have many unfortunate consequences, poor nutrition, mental and physical health problems, difficulties with the law, poor school performance, and ultimately, fewer job opportunities in later life.

This legislation will provide a benefit of at least \$330 per child for all NWT families with net incomes of \$20,921 or less. In addition, families with working income of \$3,750 or more will receive an additional territorial worker's supplement. The supplement will be phased in so that the maximum benefit becomes available when working income reaches \$10,000. The maximum amount will be \$275 for the first child and \$75 for the second child.

The maximum annual NWT Child Benefit, including the supplement, will be \$605 for a one child family, \$1,010 for a two-child family, and \$1,340 for a three-child family. The benefit will begin to be phased out when the family net income reaches \$20,921. The income level at which it would be eliminated for any individual family will depend on the number of children in the family. We estimate that about 60 percent of the NWT children will receive some benefit under this program.

The NWT Child Benefit will not be offset by lower social assistance payments. Starting this July, the federal government will be increasing the federal child benefit for low income families. Under the agreement reached between the federal government, the provinces and territories, the increased portion of the federal benefit must be treated as income for social assistance purposes. The provinces and territories must reinvest the savings in programs aimed at reducing child poverty. We have chosen not only to

reinvest our estimated savings of \$2.2 million in the NWT Child Benefit Program, but also to inject an additional \$2 million annually into the program.

This program will reduce the disincentive for families on social assistance to earn wage income, since this portion of their income will not be reduced. In addition, the territorial worker's supplement provides an actual incentive to enter the work force, in order to receive the additional benefits.

The NWT benefit will be administered by Revenue Canada and delivered monthly together with the federal child benefit in a single cheque. The two amounts will be shown separately for information purposes.

If legislation is passed by June 30, 1998, the first payment will be issued on July 20, 1998.

The benefit will be paid to the children's primary care giver, the same parent receiving the federal child benefit. Usually, this is the mother.

In most cases, there will be no need for families to apply for the benefit. Families will be automatically considered for benefits if they have filed income tax returns as NWT residents. An application will be required following the birth or adoption of a child.

This legislation will result in low-income families being better able to meet their children's basic needs. In addition, low-income families will have an incentive to enter the work force if employment is available.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, this amendment to the NWT Income Tax Act also allows for the electronic filing of tax returns. This part of the amendment will not affect the administration of the act in practice, since Revenue Canada has accepted electronic returns from NWT residents for several years.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Todd. A chairman or a designate of the standing committee which reviewed the bill will make opening remarks. I believe it is Mr. Erasmus.

MR. ERASMUS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Government Operations reviewed Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, at its meeting on May 27, 1998. The

committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his staff for presenting the bill. Bill 16 would amend the Income Tax Act to establish an NWT Child Benefit. The bill also provides for the electronic filing of tax returns. The bill implements the NWT aspects of the National Child Benefit Program. This program restructures the existing National Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement Program to take effect July, 1998. The program is a joint approach agreed to by the federal, provincial and territorial governments. Under the program the federal government will increase its benefits for low income families with children by \$850 million. Provinces and territories will decrease their social assistance payments for families with children by the national

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benefit amount, while ensuring that the overall income support is not reduced and the net savings and income support costs for the provinces and territories must be reinvested into programs and services for low income families. This must be used to reduce child poverty, increase attachment to the work force or reduce overlap and simplify administration. The NWT will provide monthly payments to families based on net family income and the number of children in the family. The NWT benefit will be administered by Revenue Canada and paid monthly with the federal benefit to the child's primary caregiver.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee had no difficulty with Bill 16. However, committee Members may have additional comments or questions on this bill as we proceed. This concludes the standing committee's comments on Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. The Chair thanks the Chairman of the government operations, Mr. Erasmus, for making the presentation. I would like to offer to the ministry, before we get into general comments and questions and so on, if you wish to bring in the witnesses before we consider the bill. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Proceed. Before we proceed with general comments, I would like to ask the Minister if you wish

to introduce the witnesses to the committee. Thank you.

HON. JOHN TODD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my immediate left is Denise Gangon, who is with the Justice Department and on my immediate right is Margaret Melhorn, who is the Deputy Minister of Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you and welcome to the committee. We are dealing with Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, and the floor is now open for general comments. Mr. Picco.

MR. PICCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think several times over the last two and a half years I had conversations with Mr. Todd and in the House itself, asked questions on some type of relief for low income families. I am very pleased that Mr. Todd and the government took a proactive stance on this issue and I think it is a singular incidence of good governance of the Northwest Territories during the 13th Session. As MLAs, our primary role is to pass legislation and I believe this is a good piece of legislation. I would have hoped for maybe a little higher family threshold of income so that more families could have benefited from the Child Tax Benefit, but I am in agreement and congratulate the Minister and his staff for bringing forward this piece of legislation that indicates a caring government. I guess it was not the case with some people in the first two years when the reductions and deficit reductions were in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Mr. Ootes.

MR. OOTES:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, like Mr. Picco, I would like to express my compliments that this is coming about and that the initiative has been taken by both Minister Todd and Mr. Dent on this matter. Certainly, I think one of the interesting areas and beneficial areas is the redirection of some of the funding that is saved to the territorial government and it is used to reduce child poverty, reduce overlap, simplify administration and so forth as well and direct it to families in need. I want to pass on my

compliments on this and I think it is a good bill as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. General comments from the floor. Clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, clause 1?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Page nine. Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page ten, Clause 5. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 6. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Clause 7. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 11, Clause 8. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 9. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Does the committee agree that Bill 16 is ready for third reading?

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Bill 16 is now ready for third reading and on behalf of the committee I would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee. Thank you. As agreed to by Members that subsequent to Bill 16 we are to deal with Bill 17, and we will proceed with Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and Justices of the Peace Act. I believe Mr. Arlooktoo is now ready to proceed with his opening remarks. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, amendments to the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is required because of a September 18, 1997, ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada in an appeal from judgements in PEI, Manitoba and Alberta. That case concerned the question whether the judicial independence of judges was breached when governments cut back the salaries and benefits of judges as part of the fiscal restraint measures of recent years. The Supreme Court ruled that a commission must be interposed between the judiciary and the Executive or legislature to report on a regular basis on the adequacy of judicial compensation and to report on proposed changes or freezes to judicial compensation. While judicial salaries can be cut back pursuant to general restraint measures, these must first be reviewed by the Judicial Compensation Review Commission.

The Supreme Court suspended its judgment for one year to provide time for jurisdictions to establish judicial compensation commissions.

Commissions must be independent, effective and objective. Based on the reasoning of the Supreme Court and the proposed course of action in other jurisdictions, the bill provides that the commission will be composed of three members, none of whom may be judges, sitting MLAs, public servants or lawyers. One member will be chosen by the judges, one by the government and these two members will select the third, who will be the chairperson.

The mandate of the commission will be to review proposals to change or freeze salaries and other benefits, and to review judicial remuneration every three years in light of inflation and other factors. The commission will initially review the compensation package, previously negotiated between the judges and the government, including the cutbacks to judges' salaries.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Constitution does not require that decisions of the commission be binding. However, the draft bill does provide for binding decisions on the basis that the experience of jurisdictions with commissions making binding recommendations is that commissions constituted with responsible members will make responsible decisions. As Minister of Justice and Attorney General, I prefer this to the alternative of non-binding recommendations, which would require the government to give reasons if it rejected a

recommendation. These reasons could be reviewed by the courts to determine if they were defensibly rational. Non-binding recommendations risks the spectacle of judges taking the government to court and courts overturning decisions of the government.

Also included in this bill are minor amendments to the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act, to remove a potential barrier to the capacity of Justices of the Peace to exercise jurisdiction under the Young Offenders Act. It was the intention of a previous Legislative Assembly to give this jurisdiction to Justices of the Peace but additional changes are required to make it happen.

Mr. Chairman, I, and my officials, will be happy to answer any questions that the Members of the committee might have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Arlooktoo. While we will make allowance for the committees and Members of the committee to ask questions, I believe Mr. Enuaraq, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, has an opening remark. Mr. Enuaraq.

MR. ENUARAQ:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Social Programs reviewed Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act, at its meeting on May 28, 1998. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Justice and officials from the Department of Justice for presenting the bill and responding to the committee's questions. Bill 17 is in large part a response to developments over the last several years relating to judicial independence in the Northwest Territories and across Canada. This bill would amend the Territorial Court Act to provide for the establishment of NWT Judicial Remuneration Commission, as required by a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada.

On September 18, 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on the question of whether the Governments of PEI, Manitoba and Alberta had breached the Constitutional principle of judicial independence when they cut back the salaries and benefits of provincial court judges in recent years. The SCC held that, to preserved judicial independence, each province and territory must establish an independent commission between the judiciary and the Executive. The body would report regularly to the

Executive and the Legislature on the adequacy of judicial compensation and on any proposed changes or freezes to judicial compensation.

The Supreme Court of Canada later clarified its decision and said that each jurisdiction must have a commission by September 18, 1998. If a commission was not set up, the independence of the territorial court judges in the Northwest Territories could be successfully challenged.

Under the bill, the Judicial Remuneration Commission would review judges salaries and benefits every three years or more often if requested and would make recommendations to the Minister on these matters. The recommendations of the commission would be binding. Committee Members questioned the Minister about several aspects of the bill, in particular, some Members questioned whether the recommendations of the commission should be binding. Under the court decision, the recommendations are not required to be binding, but they should not be set aside lightly. If a recommendation is not

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followed, the decision must be able to be justified in court. The committee recognizes that there are benefits to providing for binding recommendations and that this would result in the less likelihood of litigation or compensation issues. The bill also would add a provision that the Cabinet may not vary the location of which a territorial judge may reside, except with the consent of the judge. This is consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada decision.

The second aspect of this bill would amend the Justice of the Peace Act and the Territorial Court Act to clarify that a Justice of the Peace has jurisdiction to deal with the youth under the Young Offenders Act. Subject to the terms of the JP's appointment, the JP could preside at a trial of a young person for offences under either federal or Northwest Territories law, where the offence is an eligible offence under the regulations. The bill also provides that JPs are appointed as youth court judges on the recommendation of the Chief Judge. Currently, the recommendation of the Chief Judge is not required.

Mr. Chairman, committee Members may have additional comments or questions on this bill as we proceed. This concludes the standing committees comments on Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you, Mr. Enuaraq. That takes us to general comments. Before we proceed with general comments, I would like to ask the honourable Minister if he wishes to bring in the witnesses. Mr. Arlooktoo.

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Do we have the agreement of the Members?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Proceed. Thank you. I thank the Sergeant-at-Arms for assisting the witnesses. Mr. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses to the committee?

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have with me Mr. Don Cooper, the Deputy Minister. Gerry Sutton, the Assistant Deputy Minister. Denise Gagnon, Legislative Counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. For the record I did want to indicate we are dealing with Bill 17, An Act the Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act. We are not ready for general comments. Shall we proceed with clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Part 1, Territorial Court Act. Clause 1. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 6, part 2. Clause 2. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Page 7, part 3. Clause 3. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Clause 4. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Bill as a whole. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 17 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ningark):

Thank you. Bill 17 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and the witnesses for appearing before the committee. Thank you. We have no further items to consider in this committee. I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER:

The House will come back to order. We are on item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Ningark.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. NINGARK:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to indicate to you that your committee has been considering Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, and Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act and would like to report that Bills 16 and 17 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. Seconded by Mr. Barnabas. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Arlooktoo.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

BILL 7: An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act

HON. GOO ARLOOKTOO:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Aivilik, that Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act, be read for the third time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 7 has had third reading.

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Third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):

Mr. Speaker, there is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations immediately after adjournment. At 9:00 a.m. tomorrow of the Ordinary Members' Caucus.

Orders of the day for Friday, May 29, 1998:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements

4. Returns to Oral Questions --ADJOURNMENT
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, No. 2
 - Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 1998-99
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
- Bill 15, Adoption Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2
 - Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act and the Justices of the Peace Act
22. Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER:

Thank you. This House stands adjourned to Friday, May 29, 1998, at 10:00 a.m.